

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 1820

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, LI

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM

REF: STATE 51768

1. SUMMARY: LIBERIA IS CURRENTLY PURCHASING NO FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING (FMT). INCREASES IN COST OF FMT WOULD, HOWEVER, AFFECT TRAINING PROVIDED BY GRANT AID. BOTH GOL AND U.S. TRAINING PRIORITIES LIE IN THOSE COURSES WHICH CANNOT PRACTICALLY BE MET BY IN-COUNTRY PROGRAMS BUT WHICH ARE NECESSARY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF LIBERIA'S LIMITED MILITARY CAPABILITY. CUTBACKS IN TRAINING GRANTS WOULD FORCE CURTAILMENT OF OUT-OF-COUNTRY TRAINING BUT, ALONE, WOULD NOT BE EXPECTED SERIOUSLY TO IMPAIR GOL-U.S. RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING ARE COMMENTS KEYED TO SUBPARAGRAPHS A THROUGH F OF PARAGRAPH 5 OF STATE 051768:

A. IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON U.S.-GOL RELATIONS WOULD DEPEND UPON MAGNITUDE OF REQUIRED PROGRAM CUTBACKS. GOL HAS CANCELLED SEVERAL PROGRAMMED COURSES AND REQUESTED SUBSTITUTES. SINCE SUBSTITUTIONS NOT YET APPROVED, EMBASSY EXPECTS MINIMUM IMPACT FOR FY 76. FORCED MODERATE CUTBACK FOR FY 77 PLANNED PROGRAM COULD "UPSET" LIBERIAN MILITARY BUT EMB/MILMISSION WOULD EXPECT GOL TO BE "UNDERSTANDING."

B. GOL MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAM PRIORITIES VARY FROM
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YEAR TO YEAR. OF CONTINUING GREAT IMPORTANCE IS FUNDING FOR

COMMAND & GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE ON AT LEAST A BI-ANNUAL BASIS. OTHER HIGH PRIORITIES FOR FY 77 INCLUDE: (1) NAVY (LIBERIAN NATIONAL COAST GUARD) - COURSES PROVIDING SKILLS REQUIRED FOR OPERATING AND MAINTAINING EQUIPMENT ACQUIRED DURING 1976, E.G. COURSES TO TRAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE PERSONNEL, GUNNER'S MATE, RADIOMAN; (2) WOMEN'S AUXILLIARY CORPS - LEADERSHIP TRAINING AT NCO - AND JUNIOR-OFFICER LEVELS TO DEVELOP PERSONNEL TO OCCUPY LEADERSHIP ROLES IN THIS NEW ELEMENT OF ARMED FORCES ESTABLISHED MID-1975; AND (3) ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT - REFLECTING NEW DEFENSE MINISTER GREAVES' EMPHASIS ON CONSTRUCTION AND CIVIC ACTION AREAS. LITTLE OR NO GOL FUNDS ARE EXPECTED TO BE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE OF MILITARY TRAINING IN THE NEAR FUTURE. SHOULD GRANT-AID TRAINING FOR LIBERIA BE SUSPENDED AND, BARRING UNFORE- SEEN REORDERING OF GOL BUDGET PRIORITIES, TRAINING REQUIREMENT WOULD NOT BE MET. CONTINUED MODEST LEVELS OF GRANT-AID ARE THEREFORE REQUIRED TO MEET AFL'S TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

C. U.S. NATIONAL OBJECTIVE OF IMPROVING QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF LIBERIA'S LIMITED MILITARY CAPABILITY RE- QUIRES TRAINING AS RECOMMENDED. U.S. PRIORITIES FOR OUT-OF- COUNTRY LIBERIAN MILITARY TRAINING ARE: (1) OFFICER PROFESSION- AL COURSES, PARTICULARLY MANAGEMENT COURSES; PROFESSIONAL STAFF COURSES; SELECTED ADVANCED COURSES (ENGINEER, ARTILLERY AND SIGNAL); (2) SKILL COURSES IN SPECIALIZED AREAS FOR WHICH NO IN-COUNTRY CAPABILITY EXISTS AND WHICH IT WOULD NOT BE ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE TO DEVELOP IN MID-RANGE PERIOD, E.G., AIRCRAFT MAIN- TENANCE, PATROL CRAFT OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, ORDNANCE, SIGNALS, AND MEDICAL; (3) COURSES INTENDED TO PROVIDE LEADER- SHIP AND OPERATIONAL SKILLS TO THE NEWLY-FORMED WOMEN'S AUXILLIARY CORPS. CURRENT LEVELS OF GRANT AID ONLY PARTIALLY MEET OUT-OF-COUNTRY TRAINING REQUIREMENTS OF THE LIBERIAN ARMED FORCES. DOUBLING COSTS AT PRESENT PROGRAM FUNDING LEVEL, BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF TRAINEES POSSIBLE, WOULD WEAKEN STATED U.S. OBJECTIVE OF UPGRADING LIBERIA'S MILITARY CAPABILITY.

D. WE WOULD NOT EXPECT THAT AFL WOULD ABANDON ENTIRE TYPES OF TRAINING BUT, RATHER, WOULD REDUCE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN CERTAIN SKILL LEVELS.

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E. WE WOULD NOT EXPECT GOL TO LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR EQUI- VALENT TRAINING. CURRENT GOL INTEREST IN U.S. MILITARY MATERIAL AND DOCTRINE WOULD, IN THE SHORT TERM, REMAIN UNAFFECTED.

F. EMBASSY/MILITARY MISSION EXPECT THAT TRAINING NOW OBTAINED FROM U.S. WOULD BE REDUCED TO APPROXIMATELY 20 PER CENT OF CURRENT LEVEL WITHOUT GRANT ASSISTANCE. BECAUSE OF THE SIZE

OF AFL AND LIMITED REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN SELECTED SKILLS,
IN-COUNTRY TRAINING REMAINS IMPRACTICAL AND UNECONOMICAL IN
AREAS CURRENTLY BEING MET BY OUT-OF-COUNTRY GRANT TRAINING.
EFFECTIVENESS OF LIBERIA'S MILITARY FORCES WOULD THEREFORE
BE IMPARIED BY ELIMINATION OF GRANT TRAINING.
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